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AMERICAN LEGATION

Bern, Switzerland

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Dated: March 7, 1947

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Mar. 24, 1947

SAFEHAVEN REPORT

DISTRIBUTION:

Subject: Financial Relationships Between

- * Willi Daugs (German) Stockholm
- * Otto Ehrlich (German) Stockholm,
- * Marcel Wolf (Dutch) The Hague, and
- * E. V. D. Wight (American) Zurich.

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Reference is made to Helsinki's despatch No. 840, October 30, 1946; London's telegram No. 164, October 8, (sent to Stockholm as 171, repeated to Department as 6585, to Helsinki as 38 and to The Hague as 103); Stockholm's telegram to the Department (number unknown), September 26, repeated to London as 196, The Hague as 15, Helsinki as 35, and to Bern as 7; London's despatch No. 1743, September 17, 1946; and to The Hague's Safehaven Report No. 7 of September 12, 1946 and references cited therein. The Chargé d'Affaires of the Finnish Legation at Bern recently introduced to an officer of this Legation Mr. Lars Hornborg, attorney for the Finnish National Bank, who stated that the Finnish Government presently was endeavoring to reverse the judgment made in 1945 by a Swedish court which had awarded Mr. E. V. D. Wight partial satisfaction of his claims against the Roderi A/B "Ergo". Mr. Hornborg and the Finnish Chargé d'Affaires at Bern wished the Legation to indicate in writing whether or not Mr. Wight was the true beneficiary of this claim. They were advised that, in view of the interests of an American national in the matter, the Legation was not in a position to comment on the matter. Mr. Hornborg incidentally remarked that, according to his information, the Swedish Government recently has issued an expulsion order against Daugs.

For the information of the Embassy at The Hague and other Missions who have been concerned in this affair, the following background information with respect to Mr. Marcel Wolf, recently located in the files of this Legation, may be of interest:

(1) Investigations conducted in 1942 by the British and American Consulates General at Zurich revealed that Mr. Marcel Wolf, then resident at The Hague, was the sole owner of "Panag" Handelsgesellschaft A.G. of Chur, Switzerland, and that this company was employed

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at that time as a medium for conducting ransom traffic for the account of the Germans. Thus, at the instigation of a German national, described by the Consulate General as pro-Nazi, a certain Wilhelm Konrad Runne, Panag communicated with Daniel Wolf, New York, requesting that money be transmitted to the company in order that his brother, Marcel Wolf, and his family, then living in the Netherlands, might be released by the German occupying authorities. As reported by the American Consulate General in War Trade List Report No. 246 of January 25, 1943, a director of Panag "stated that Marcel Wolf formerly controlled about thirty firms in Holland, which probably have now been placed under Nazi supervision. Regarding his interests in Panag she stated that apparently he was forced to give full power of attorney to an engineer named Wilhelm Konrad Runne."

(2) The American Consulate General on January 27, 1943 reported that it had ascertained the following with respect to the background of Marcel Wolf and Daniel Wolf from an important Dutch Government official: "He knew of this family and of their business and social associates and that they were considered to be entirely unscrupulous and generally undesirable. He stated that they had built up an immense fortune through various dishonest transactions, some of which caused public scandals. He remembered one, in particular, in which the Wolfs had succeeded through questionable means in obtaining from the Polish Government an enormous order for woolen cloth for the manufacture of uniforms for the Polish army. The uniforms when exposed to rain became absolutely shapeless and unwearable because of shrinkage and it was ascertained that the material was some sort of artificial cloth. He added that the Wolfs were so undesirable and unpopular that when Marcel or Daniel applied for membership in the golf club at The Hague, they were promptly black-balled, whereupon Wolf purchased additional property around his estate and built one of the most beautiful and luxurious courses in Europe. According to this informant that course is now one of Germany's principal airfields for attacks against England." The Consulate General concluded that, "It is believed that a person of Wolf's character would not hesitate to cooperate fully with the Axis Government...It would appear that his foreign interests must be extensive and that there must be some cooperation with the Germans, otherwise it would be difficult to understand why a German has been sent to Zürich by the Nazis to reside here indefinitely in one of the more expensive hotels solely for the purpose of managing Wolf's interests."

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